

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 EUR-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05  
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R 040833Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7892  
INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN  
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
AMCONSUL SURABAYA  
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, ID  
SUBJECT: SAWITO CONSPIRACY TRIAL FINALLY HEARS DJUARSA

REF: JAKARTA 2597

1. SUMMARY: AFTER A DELAY OF SEVERAL WEEKS, FORMER AMBASSADOR TO YUGOSLAVIA MAJ. GEN. ISHAK DJUARSA WAS FINALLY ALLOWED TO TESTIFY IN THE TRIAL OF SAWITO KARTOWIBOWO FOR CONSPIRING TO OVERTHROW THE PRESIDENT. HE CONFIRMED FORMER VICE PRESIDENT HATTA'S WILLINGNESS TO TAKE OVER AS PRESIDENT IF IT COULD BE DONE IN A PEACEFUL AND CONSTITUTIONAL MANNER, AND MENTIONED THAT GENERAL SURONO WAS, WITHOUT SURONO'S KNOWLEDGE, PROPOSED AS HATTA'S DEPUTY. DJUARSA REFERRED TO A SMUGGLING CASE HE UNCOVERED IN 1973 BUT WAS NOT ALLOWED TO PROSECUTE. DEFENSE COUNSEL BOMBARDED HIM WITH FURTHER QUESTIONS CONCERNING CORRUPTION BY SENIOR OFFICIALS WHICH SEEMED CLEARLY DESIGNED TO DISCREDIT THE SUHARTO ADMINISTRATION AND WHICH THE JUDGE DIRECTED HIM NOT TO ANSWER. WITH THE MPR SESSION OUT OF THE WAY, THE TRIAL SHOULD MOVE ALONG MORE QUICKLY FROM NOW ON.

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END SUMMARY.

2. THE TRIAL OF SAWITO KARTOWIBOWO ON CHARGES OF PLOTTING TO OUST THE PRESIDENT BY UNCONSTITUTIONAL MEANS RESUMED APRIL 3 TO HEAR FINALLY THE TESTIMONY OF MAJ. GEN. ISHAK DJUARSA, FORMER AMBASSADOR TO YUGOSLAVIA DETAINED SINCE 1976 FOR HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH SAWITO. DJUARSA HAD BEEN

SUMMONED FOUR TIMES DURING THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS BUT DETENTION AUTHORITIES HAD REFUSED TO MAKE HIM AVAILABLE.

3. DJUARSA TESTIFIED THAT FORMER VICE PRESIDENT MOHAMMED HATTA HAD AT FIRST DECLINED TO MAKE HIMSELF AVAILABLE AS A REPLACEMENT FOR PRESIDENT SUHARTO BECAUSE OF HIS ADVANCED AGE, BUT DJUARSA AND OTHERS PERSUADED HIM TO CHANGE HIS MIND. THE SAWITO GROUP, HE SAID, ADMIRE HATTA AS A MAN OF INTELLIGENCE AND CHARACTER AND A TRUE DEMOCRAT, CONSIDERING HIM A SUITABLE PRESIDENT IN SPITE OF HIS AGE. HATTA PREFERRED A MILITARY MAN AS VICE PRESIDENT, DJUARSA REMARKED, AND THE SAWITO GROUP HAD SUGGESTED BUT NOT CONTACTED DEPUTY ARMED FORCES COMMANDER GENERAL SURONO. HATTA ALWAYS INSISTED, HE SAID, THAT THE TRANSFER OF POWER TAKE PLACE IN A DEMOCRATIC AND CONSTITUTIONAL MANNER WITHOUT ANY FORCE BEING USED.

4. QUESTIONED BY THE PRESIDING JUDGE, DJUARSA SAID THAT WHEN HE WAS MILITARY COMMANDER IN ACEH IN 1973 HE UNCOVERED A SMUGGLING RING ORGANIZED BY A HIGH-RANKING OFFICER IN JAKARTA. WHEN HE ORDERED THE ARREST OF THE ACEH PROSECUTOR FOR DISMISSING THIS SMUGGLING CASE, HE HIMSELF WAS ORDERED TO JAKARTA AND THE PROSECUTOR WAS RELEASED BY ORDER OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. THE DEFENSE COUNSEL THEN ASKED DJUARSA FOR MORE CONCRETE EXAMPLES OF CORRUPTION IN HIGH PLACES WHICH HE AND THE OTHERS IN SAWITO'S GROUP HAD DEPLORED, BUT THE JUDGE RULED THAT THE QUESTION SHOULD NOT BE ANSWERED.

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DEFENSE THEN READ OFF FOR SOME 30 MINUTES SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ABOUT CORRUPTION, SMUGGLING, AND ABUSE OF OFFICE WHICH AS REPORTED BY ONE NEWSPAPER SEEMED CLEARLY AIMED AT SUHARTO'S INNER CIRCLE AND WHICH RECEIVED THE SAME RULING BY THE JUDGE AND WERE NOT ANSWERED.

5. THE TRIAL WAS RECESSED UNTIL APRIL 10, WITH SAWITO ASKING THAT HATTA AND THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS WHO SIGNED HIS DOCUMENT "TOWARD SALVATION," WHICH DEPLORED THE CURRENT LACK OF MORALITY, BE PRESENT TO TESTIFY AT THAT TIME.

6. COMMENT: THE TRIAL HAS REGAINED ITS PACE AND INTEREST, LACKING SINCE BEFORE THE MPR SESSION LAST MONTH. WITH POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES SOMEWHAT ABATED, MORE SIGNIFICANT EVIDENCE MIGHT BE BROUGHT OUT, ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE SOME TIME BEFORE HATTA AND THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS ARE PERMITTED TO TESTIFY, IF EVER. MEANWHILE, YAP SEEMS DETERMINED TO USE THIS COUNTROOM TO PUT SUHARTO'S FAMILY AND REGIME ON TRIAL FOR CORRUPTION.

MASTERS

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## Message Attributes

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